

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

August 04, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro, Chair Leahy, Ranking Member Granger, and Vice Chairman Shelby:

As Congress considers funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, we urge you to include \$500 million to support the Emergency Food and Shelter Traditional and Humanitarian Program under title III of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act within the Appropriations Homeland Security title.¹ As you know, this funding provides shelter, food, and supportive services to individuals and families that are experiencing hunger or homelessness and importantly, allows humanitarian assistance to migrant families and individuals encountered by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). We were pleased that the House Homeland bill includes \$280 million and that the Senate Homeland bill included \$330 million for this critical program.² However, due to the growing unhoused crisis in the country, compounded by inflation, and the recent influx of migrants to safe haven cities, we feel strongly that additional federal aid is needed to ensure vulnerable populations receive timely life-saving food and shelter.

As one of the three cities in the country that adhere to the right to shelter mandate, New York City is experiencing an uptick in individuals seeking sheltering services. Rising rents, the end of eviction moratoria, increasing income inequality, and the impacts of the COVID pandemic on low-income households all contribute to increased pressure on the City's resources and shelter capacity. New York City has the lowest proportion of unsheltered homeless of any large City in the United States because of the right to shelter. We are proud that no family or individual must remain unhoused in our City but without additional federal resources, the city will struggle to support thousands of families with access to shelter, food, transportation, basic health and first aid, legal services, and other essential support services as many of our existing funding streams do not support these households.

¹ 42 U.S.C. 11331 et seq.

² The House bill includes \$130 million for local social service organizations aiding our nation's hungry and homeless (traditional) and \$150 million for organizations providing humanitarian assistance to migrant families and individuals encountered by the Department of Homeland Security (humanitarian), the Senate bill included \$130 million (traditional) and \$200 million (humanitarian).

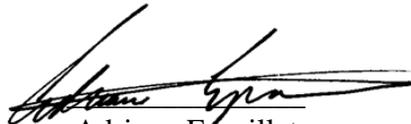
Additionally, there is increased demand for safe and secure shelter in New York City as an influx of asylum seekers has been arriving from Latin America and other regions of the world. State officials in Texas and Arizona have been sending buses of individuals to Washington D.C. as well as directing families and individuals to other places in the United States in an attempt to prevent these people from settling in their states. These racist and xenophobic acts are anti-American and have no place in our world today.

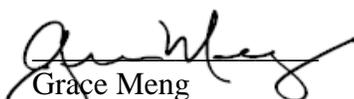
New York City is a safe haven city and will continue to welcome asylum seekers in need with open arms. As we work to remedy solutions to manage migration in the U.S., we would be remiss if we did not increase funding for programs that are effectively aiding individuals who are exercising their legal right to seek asylum in the U.S. As one of the largest and most ethnically diverse metropolises in the world, New York City is proud to meet its moral obligation in providing humanitarian assistance to those in need, but it is evident that additional aid from the federal government is warranted given the recent uptick. As of the end of July 2022, NYC estimates that approximately 4,000 individuals – the majority in families with children – entered the Department of Homeless Services shelter system. Reports to our offices reflect that New York City is expecting to receive thousands more in the near future.

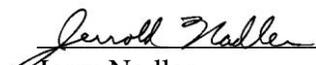
The requested funds will aid in expanding shelter capacity, and provide mental health services, adequate food, and appropriate legal services that are critical in supporting asylum seekers with legal counsel and other necessary services to facilitate a smooth process. Many of the individuals arriving are escaping life-threatening situations and it is our duty to provide humanitarian support and protection. Increasing funding for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program will provide New York City and other safe-haven cities with adequate resources to facilitate supplemental funding for the humanitarian needs of the asylum seekers arriving.

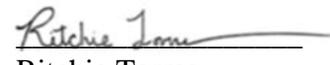
Thank you for your attention and consideration of this request and we look forward to your response.

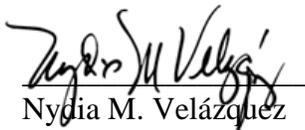
Sincerely,


Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress


Grace Meng
Member of Congress


Jerry Nadler
Member of Congress


Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress


Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress


Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress


Jamaal Bowman
Member of Congress


Yvette Clarke
Member of Congress